



Desks are spaced apart ahead of planned in-person learning at an elementary school on March 19, 2021, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

## Test scores show historic COVID setbacks for kids across U.S.

By COLLIN BINKLEY  
AP Education Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The COVID-19 pandemic spared no state or region as it caused historic learning setbacks for America's children, erasing decades of academic progress and widening racial disparities, according to results of a national test that provide the sharpest look yet at the scale of the crisis.

Across the country, math scores saw their largest decreases ever. Reading scores dropped to 1992 levels. Nearly four in 10 eighth graders failed to grasp basic math concepts.

Not a single state saw a notable improvement in their average test scores, with some simply treading water at best.

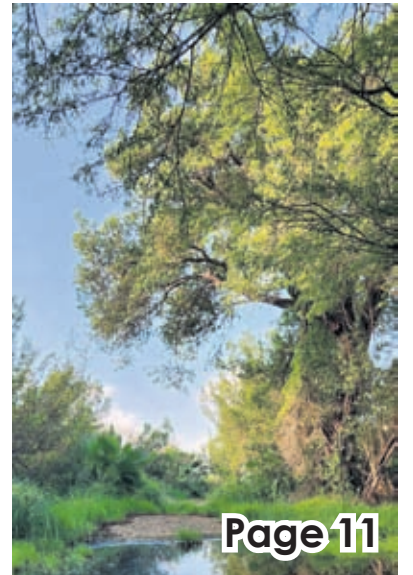
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# Test scores show historic COVID setbacks for kids across U.S.

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Those are the findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress — known as the “nation’s report card” — which tested hundreds of thousands of fourth and eighth graders across the country this year. It was the first time the test had been given since 2019, and it’s seen as the first nationally representative study of the pandemic’s impact on learning.

“It is a serious wakeup call for us all,” Peggy Carr, commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, a branch of the Education Department, said in an interview. “In NAEP, when we experience a 1- or 2-point decline, we’re talking about it as a significant impact on a student’s achievement. In math, we experienced an 8-point decline — historic for this assessment.”

Researchers usually think of a 10-point gain or drop as equivalent to roughly a year of learning.

It’s no surprise that children are behind. The pandemic upended every facet of life and left millions learning from home for months or more. The results released Monday reveal the depth of those setbacks, and the size of the challenge facing schools as they help students catch up.

Secretary Miguel Cardona said it’s a sign that schools need to redouble their efforts, using billions of dollars that Congress gave schools to help students recover.

“Let me be very clear: these results are not acceptable,” Cardona said. The NAEP test is typically given every two years. It was taken between January and March by a sample of students in every state, along with 26 of the nation’s largest school districts. Scores had been stalling even before the pandemic, but the new results show decreases on a scale not seen before.

In both math and reading, students scored lower than those tested in 2019. But while reading scores dipped, math scores plum-



**Peggy Carr, Commissioner of the National Center for Education, speaks during an interview with The Associated Press about the National Assessment of Education Process, Friday, Oct. 21, 2022, in Washington.**

meted by the largest margins in the history of the NAEP test, which began in 1969.

Math scores were worst among eighth graders, with 38% earning scores deemed “below basic” — a cutoff that measures, for example, whether students can find the third angle of a triangle if they’re given the other two. That’s worse than 2019, when 31% of eighth graders scored below that level.

No part of the country was exempt. Every region saw test scores slide, and every state saw declines in at least one subject.

Several major districts saw test scores fall by more than 10 points. Cleveland saw the largest single drop, falling 16 points in fourth-grade reading, along with a 15-point decline in fourth-grade math. Baltimore and Tennessee’s Shelby County also saw precipitous declines.

“This is more confirmation that the pandemic hit us really hard,” said Eric Gordon, chief executive for the Cleveland Metropolitan

School District. To help students recover, the school system has beefed up summer school and added after-school tutoring.

“I’m not concerned that they can’t or won’t recover,” Gordon said. “I’m concerned that the country won’t stay focused on getting kids caught up.”

Baltimore has added small-group tutoring and expanded summer learning programs to help students catch up, said Sonja Santelises, chief executive officer of Baltimore City Public Schools. Classrooms in the district were shuttered much of the 2020-2021 school year.

“School does matter,” Santelises said. “You can’t keep kids out of schools for two years and not see an impact.”

The results show a reversal of progress on math scores, which had made big gains since the 1990s. Reading, by contrast, had changed little in recent decades, so even this year’s relatively small decreases put the averages back to where they were in 1992.

Most concerning, however, are the gaps between students.

Confirming what many had feared, racial inequities appear to have widened during the pandemic. In fourth grade, Black and Hispanic students saw bigger decreases than white students, widening gaps that have persisted for decades.

Inequities were also reflected in a growing gap between higher and lower performing students. In math and reading, scores fell most sharply among the lowest performing students, creating a widening chasm between struggling students and the rest of their peers.

Surveys done as part of this year’s test illustrate the divide.

When schools shifted to remote learning, higher performing students were far more likely to have reliable access to quiet spaces, computers and help from their teachers, the survey found.

The results make clear that schools must address the

“long-standing and systemic shortcomings of our education system,” said Alberto Carvalho, superintendent of Los Angeles schools and a member of the National Assessment Governing Board, which sets the policies for the test. “While the pandemic was a blow to schools and communities, we cannot use it as an excuse,” he said. “We have to stay committed to high standards and expectations and help every child succeed.”

Other recent studies have found that students who spent longer periods learning online suffered greater setbacks. But the NAEP results show no clear connection. Areas that returned to the classroom quickly still saw significant declines, and cities — which were more likely to stay remote longer — actually saw milder decreases than suburban districts, according to the results.

Los Angeles can claim one of the few bright spots in the results. The nation’s second-largest school district saw eighth-grade reading scores increase by 9 points, the only significant uptick in any district. For other districts, it was a feat just to hold even, as achieved by Dallas and Florida’s Hillsborough County.

Testing critics caution against putting too much stock in exams like NAEP, but there’s no doubt that the skills it aims to measure are critical. Students who take longer to master reading are more likely to drop out and end up in the criminal justice system, research has found. And eighth grade is seen as a pivotal time to develop skills for math, science and technology careers.

For Carr, the results raise new questions about what will happen to students who appear to be far behind in attaining those skills. “We want our students to be prepared globally for STEM careers, science and technology and engineering,” she said. “This puts all of that at risk. We have to do a reset. This is a very serious issue, and it’s not going to go away on its own.” □

Associated Press



## Chinese officers charged in plot to obstruct U.S. Huawei probe

By ERIC TUCKER and NO-MAAN MERCHANT  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Two men suspected of being Chinese intelligence officers have been charged with attempting to obstruct the U.S. criminal investigation and prosecution of Chinese tech giant Huawei, according to court documents unsealed Monday. The cases were announced at a news conference that featured the heads of both the FBI and the Justice Department, a rare joint presence reflecting a concerted American show of force against Chinese intelligence efforts. Washington has long accused Beijing of meddling in U.S. political affairs and stealing secrets and intellectual property. Eleven other Chinese have been charged with various offenses in cases, including harassment of individuals in the U.S., that FBI Director Christopher Wray said show that China's "economic assaults and their rights violations are part of the same problem."

"They try to silence anyone who fights back against their theft companies, politicians, individuals just as they try to silence anyone who fights back against their other aggressions," he said. The two men in the



Attorney General Merrick Garland, center, flanked by Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco, left, and FBI Director Christopher Wray, speaks to reporters as they announce charges against two men suspected of being Chinese intelligence officers for attempting to obstruct a U.S. criminal investigation and prosecution of Chinese tech giant Huawei, at the Department of Justice in Washington, Monday, Oct. 23, 2022.

Associated Press

Huawei case, Guochun He and Zheng Wang, are accused of trying to direct a person with the U.S. government whom they believed was a cooperator to provide confidential information about the Justice Department's investigation, including about witnesses, trial evidence and potential new charges. One of the defendants paid about \$61,000 for the information, the Justice Department

said. The department has issued arrest warrants for the pair, but it's not clear whether they will ever be taken into custody.

Attorney General Merrick Garland also announced charges against four other Chinese nationals, accusing them of using the cover of an academic institute to try to procure sensitive technology and equipment as well as interfering with protests that "would

have been embarrassing to the Chinese government." And two additional people were arrested and five others charged with harassing someone living in the U.S. to return to China as part of what Beijing calls "Operation Fox Hunt."

"Today's cases make clear that Chinese agents will not hesitate to break the law and to violate international norms in the process," Deputy Attorney General Lisa

Monaco said.

Wang and He are accused of reaching out to someone who began working as a double agent for the U.S. government, and that person's contacts with the defendants were overseen by the FBI. At one point last year, prosecutors say, the unnamed person passed to the defendants a single-page document that appeared to be classified as secret and that contained information about a purported plan to charge and arrest Huawei executives in the U.S.

But the document was actually prepared by the government for the purposes of the prosecution that was unsealed Monday, and the information in it was not accurate. The company is not named in the charging documents, though the references make clear that it's Huawei, which was charged in 2019 with bank fraud and again the following year with new counts of racketeering conspiracy and a plot to steal trade secrets. Spokespeople for Huawei and the Chinese Embassy in Washington did not immediately return messages seeking comment. Huawei has previously called the federal investigation "political persecution, plain and simple." □

## Mary J. Blige, Jill Biden team up for cancer prevention

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Biden administration's initiative to spur prevention and treatment of cancer got a dose of celebrity support Monday when singer Mary J. Blige joined Jill Biden and the American Cancer Society to announce national meetings on breast and cervical cancer.

The cancer society pledged to convene the events after President Joe Biden and the first lady resurrected the "cancer moonshot" initiative this year.

The program provides more money for research to, as Jill Biden said, "help us end cancer as we know it. For good."

R&B superstar Blige said she lost aunts and other family members to breast, cervical and lung cancer. She has promoted breast cancer screening, especially among Black women who are disproportionately affected, through the Black Women's Health Imperative.

Blige on Monday blamed misconceptions about mammograms among Black women and "the

practice of not wanting other people in our business" for disparities in breast cancer outcomes between Blacks and whites.

She said she is convinced that, had her aunts, godmother and grandparents been informed about cancer, "they would have a different outcome today." She paused a few times to stay composed.

The first lady reached for Blige when the Grammy Award-winning singer returned to her seat. They sat holding hands for several minutes before Biden, whose adult son Beau died



First lady Jill Biden holds hands with singer Mary J. Blige during an event to launch the American Cancer Society's national roundtables on breast and cervical cancer in the State Dining Room of the White House, Monday, Oct. 24, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

of brain cancer in 2015, thanked Blige for "lending your powerful voice to this cause."

The first lady said the administration's cancer initiative

will help encourage collaboration and research, invest in new treatments and therapies, and help people get the best care and support for their loved ones. □



## 2 killed in shooting at St. Louis high school; gunman dead

By **MICHAEL PHILLIS and JIM SALTER**

**Associated Press**

**ST. LOUIS (AP)** — A gunman broke into a St. Louis high school Monday morning, fatally shooting a woman and a teenage girl and wounding six others before police killed him in an exchange of gunfire.

The shooting just after 9 a.m. at Central Visual and Performing Arts High School forced students to barricade doors and huddle in classroom corners, jump from windows and run out of the building to seek safety. One terrorized girl said she was eye-to-eye with the shooter before his gun apparently jammed and she was able to run out.

Others inside the school said they heard the shooter declare: "You are all going to die." The city's police chief said fast actions by a security guard and police officers who "ran to the gunfire" helped end the shooting before more people were killed or hurt. Speaking at a news conference, Police Chief Michael Sack said the shooter was about 20 years old but did not provide a name for him or his victims. He declined to say if the woman killed was a teacher.

St. Louis Schools Superintendent Kelvin Adams said seven security guards were



Students stand in a parking lot near the Central Visual & Performing Arts High School after a reported shooting at the school in St. Louis on Monday, Oct. 24, 2022.

**Associated Press**

in the school at the time, each at an entry point of the locked building. One of the guards noticed the man trying to get in at a locked door, but couldn't. The guard notified school officials and ensured police were contacted, Sack said. "It was that timely response by that security officer, the fact that the door did cause pause for the suspect, that bought us some time," Sack said.

He declined to say how the man eventually got inside,

armed with what he described as a long gun. Central Visual and Performing Arts shares a building with another magnet school, Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience, which also was evacuated. Central has 383 students, Collegiate 336. Officers worked to get students out of the three-story brick building, then "ran to that gunfire, located that shooter and engaged that shooter in an exchange of gunfire," killing him, Sack said.

Monday's school shooting was the 40th this year resulting in injuries or death, according to a tally by Education Week the most in any single year since it began tracking shootings in 2018. These include the killings at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, in May, when 19 children and two teachers died. Monday's St. Louis shooting came on the same day a Michigan teenager pleaded guilty to terrorism and first-degree murder in a school shoot-

ing that killed four students in December 2021. Some of the six people hospitalized suffered gunshot wounds, while others were struck by shrapnel, Sack said. He did not provide any information on their conditions.

One student, 16-year-old Taniya Gholston, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch she was in a room when the shooter entered.

"All I heard was two shots and he came in there with a gun," Gholston said. "And I was trying to run and I couldn't run. Me and him made eye contact but I made it out because his gun got jammed. But we saw blood on the floor."

Ninth-grader Nylah Jones told the Post-Dispatch she was in math class when the shooter fired into the room from the hallway. The shooter was unable to get into the room and banged on the door as students piled into a corner, she said. Janay Douglas' 15-year-old daughter got stuck in a hallway when the school was locked down. Douglas said she received a call from her daughter letting her know she had heard shots. "One of her friends busted through the door, he was shot in the hand, and then her and her friends just took off running. The phone disconnected," Douglas said. □

## Fires in Nebraska, Iowa spur evacuations, destroy homes

**LINCOLN, Neb. (AP)** — Prairie fires pushed by tinder-dry conditions and winds topping 60 mph (96 kph) led to evacuations in east-

ern Nebraska and western Iowa and destroyed homes and injured two firefighters south of Nebraska's capital city of Lincoln, officials said.



Smoke rises from a grass fire just east of Olive Creek State Recreation Area in southwestern Lancaster County, Sunday, Oct. 23, 2022, near Hallam, Neb.

**Associated Press**

At least two grassland fires were first reported Sunday afternoon south of Lincoln and spread quickly as winds began to pick up and push the fires north, the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office reported.

The nearly 300 residents of Hallam, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of Lincoln, were ordered to evacuate their homes, and rural residents of southern Lancaster County and northern Gage County were urged to evacuate because of the fires.

Officials also asked farmers to turn on irrigation pivots or other water sources to help combat the fires, which were contained by

Sunday evening, with the help of rain showers that moved into the area. Officials said three homes and several outbuildings were destroyed in Lancaster County.

Two firefighters also were injured, one seriously. Officials had not released their names or updated their medical conditions by early Monday morning.

In southwestern Lancaster County and northern Gage County, residents made plans to move cattle and other valuables to Christopher Smith's farm south of the fires.

"Everybody's just trying to help out," Smith said. Meanwhile, one farm's owner worked to spray down the

home's back porch with water and set up sprinklers in case the fire got close.

Fires near Wisner in northeastern Nebraska and Harrison and Montgomery counties in western Iowa also forced brief evacuations, but there were no reports of injuries or homes damaged there.

Emergency management officials in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa said Monday that officials have not pinpointed the causes of the fires.

Rain moving across the region Monday with a cold front from the north was expected to help lower the risk of fires in the area. □



# Rishi Sunak, U.K.'s next PM, faces major economic problems

By JILL LAWLESS  
Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — Former Treasury chief Rishi Sunak is set to become Britain's first prime minister of color after being chosen Monday to lead a governing Conservative Party desperate for a safe pair of hands to guide the country through economic and political turbulence.

The challenges facing the U.K.'s third prime minister this year are enormous: He must try to shore up an economy sliding toward recession and reeling after his predecessor's brief, disastrous experiment in libertarian economics, while also attempting to unite a demoralized and divided party that trails far behind the opposition in opinion polls.

In his first public statement, Sunak said "the United Kingdom is a great country, but there is no doubt we face a profound economic challenge."

"We now need stability and unity, and I will make it my utmost priority to bring our party and our country together," said Sunak, who at 42 is Britain's youngest prime minister in 200 years. Sunak will be the first British prime minister with South Asian roots and its first Hindu leader a milestone for a country with an extensive colonial past, and one that is still contested.

Elected party leader on the major Hindu festival of Diwali, Sunak takes over from



Britain's Rishi Sunak, centre, poses for a photo with members of the 1922 Committee, in the Houses of Parliament, after it was announced he will become the new leader of the Conservative party, in London, Monday, Oct. 24, 2022.

Liz Truss, who quit last week after 45 tumultuous days in office. His only remaining rival, Penny Mordaunt, conceded and withdrew after failing to reach the nomination threshold of 100 Conservative lawmakers needed to stay in the race. Sunak will now be asked by King Charles III to form a government and becomes the prime minister in a handover of power from Truss on Tuesday.

Victory is vindication for Sunak, who lost out to Truss in the Conservative election to replace former Prime Minister Boris Johnson over the summer when party members chose her tax-cutting boosterism over his

warnings that inflation must be tamed.

Truss conceded last week that she could not deliver on her plans but only after her attempts triggered market chaos and worsened inflation at a time when millions of Britons were already struggling with soaring borrowing costs and rising energy and food prices.

The party is now desperate for someone to right the ship after months of chaos both during Truss' short term and at the end of Johnson's.

As finance minister, Sunak steered the economy through the coronavirus pandemic, winning praise for his financial support for

laid-off workers and shuttered businesses.

He now faces the huge challenge of calming markets and trying to tame inflation at a time of weakened government finances, a worsening economic outlook and a wave of strikes. Treasury chief Jeremy Hunt, appointed by Truss 10 days ago, is due to make an emergency budget statement Oct. 31 if Sunak keeps him in the job. Britain also faces broader economic problems stemming from the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the country's exit from the European Union in 2020. Sunak was a firm supporter of Brexit.

Sunak was cheered wildly by Conservative lawmakers during a packed private meeting in Parliament minutes after he won the contest on Monday.

Former Cabinet minister Chris Grayling said Sunak had urged the party "to unite and fix the problems the country faces" and had got "a rapturous reception."

Therese Coffey, who was Truss' deputy prime minister, said the whole party should support Sunak now. "We need to get behind him," she said.

But Sunak still faces resentment from supporters of Johnson for quitting the government in July, a move that helped topple the then-leader. His background as an investment banker at Goldman Sachs and his wife's vast wealth she is the daughter of an Indian billionaire also fuel a sense he is out of touch with the struggles of ordinary people.

He takes the reins after Truss' proposal for aggressive tax cuts that would be paid for through government borrowing pummeled the value of the pound, drove up the cost of government borrowing and home mortgages, and forced emergency Bank of England intervention. Truss executed a series of U-turns and replaced her Treasury chief but faced rebellion from lawmakers in her party that obliterated her authority. □

## Fierce winds rip off roofs, cut power in northern France

**PARIS (AP)** — Tornado-like storms that tore through northern France sheared off part of a church roof, felled trees and power lines and left scores of people without a safe place to live, authorities said Monday. One person suffered light injuries in the storms Sunday and some 150 people were evacuated, according to the regional administration for the Pas-de-Calais region. Images shared online showed dark clouds suddenly spinning over fields

as objects flew through the air. The winds ripped away sections of the roof of the village church in Bihucourt and damaged its belltower. Roof beams and shingles littered roads, along with trees and power lines. The firefighter service in the Pas-de-Calais region described "tornado-type" winds that targeted Bihucourt, Ervillers and Hende-court-les-Cagnicourt.

Bihucourt mayor Benoit-Vincent Caille said on public broadcaster France-Info

that the storm "ravaged the near-totality of the village. ... Some homes were razed, collapsed, there were roofs ripped off. Some 70 kilometers (40 miles) to the south, fierce winds damaged about 60 homes and other buildings in the French towns of Conchy and O-de-Selle, according to local authorities, and villagers were evacuated. Strong winds also buffeted Belgium and the Netherlands but no major damage was reported. □



Destroyed homes are seen after a tornado struck the area in Bihucourt, northern France, Monday, Oct. 24, 2022.

Associated Press



# Rights group: Turkey forces hundreds to return to Syria

**ISTANBUL (AP)** — Hundreds of Syrian men and boys were detained, beaten and forcibly returned to their country by Turkish authorities over a six-month period, a leading human rights group said Monday. The treatment of migrants living in Turkey under temporary protection is a breach of international law, New York-based Human Rights Watch said in a report.

The Turkish government has in the past rejected accusations of forcibly returning refugees to Syria.

Turkey houses the world's largest refugee population, mostly 3.6 million Syrians who fled the decade-long war in their country.

Human Rights Watch said deported Syrians told researchers that Turkish officials arrested them in their homes, workplaces and on the street. They were then detained in poor conditions, with most suffering beatings and abuse, and forced to sign documents agreeing to "voluntarily" return to Syria.

After being driven in handcuffs to the Syrian border journeys sometimes lasting



**A Syrian migrant man and daughter stand in front of their shelter in Ulus district, the old part of Turkish capital Ankara, Turkey, Sunday, Oct. 23, 2022.**

up to 21 hours they were forced across at gunpoint, the Syrians said.

"In violation of international law Turkish authorities have rounded up hundreds of Syrian refugees, even unaccompanied children, and forced them back to northern Syria," said Nadia Hardman, refugee and migrant rights researcher at Human Rights Watch.

The legal principle of non-

refoulement, which Ankara is bound to by international treaty, prohibits the return of anyone to a place where they would face a real risk of persecution, torture or a threat to life. The U.N. Commission of Inquiry on Syria last month restated that Syria is not safe for returnees.

Amid a dire economic crisis, sentiment toward refugees in Turkey has turned

for the worse, with attacks on Syrian homes and businesses.

Facing approaching elections, the government now aims to return increasing numbers of people to areas of northern Syria under the control of the Turkish military.

Earlier this month a Turkish official said nearly 527,000 Syrians had returned voluntarily. Announcing a

home-building project in Syria's northwest Idlib region in May, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said it would facilitate the return of 1 million refugees from Turkey.

Erdogan has recently signaled a change in policy toward Syria, suggesting the possibility of talks with Syrian President Bashar Assad. Ankara previously demanded Assad's removal as it backed opposition groups. Many Syrians living in Turkey fear warming relations could lead to greater pressure on them to return. "Although Turkey provided temporary protection to 3.6 million Syrian refugees, it now looks like Turkey is trying to make northern Syria a refugee dumping ground," Hardman said.

Human Rights Watch interviewed 37 Syrian men and two boys between February and August, as well as relatives of those deported to Syria.

They all said they were deported together with dozens or hundreds of others and were forced to sign forms they understood to be voluntary repatriation agreements. □

**Associated Press**

## Myanmar downplays blacklisting by money laundering watchdog



**A man shows currency notes imprinted with portrait of Gen. Aung San, late father of Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi, outside Myanmar Economic Bank on Jan. 7, 2020, in Yangon, Myanmar.**

**Associated Press**

**BANGKOK (AP)** — Myanmar's central bank has promised improvements and warned against currency manipulation after an international watchdog put the military-controlled country on a terrorism and

financial crimes blacklist. The Financial Action Task Force recommended that Myanmar be included among countries requiring stronger due diligence, citing deficiencies in its enforcement of precautions

against money laundering and other financial crimes. That jolted Myanmar's informal currency exchanges, where the dollar's value against the Myanmar kyat jumped to between 4,000-5,000 kyats from 2,900 kyats before falling back to about 3,000 kyats. The official exchange rate was 2,100 kyats per dollar on Friday. The FATF removed Myanmar from its blacklist in 2016 as its economy opened up during a brief-lived time of transition toward a civilian, democratic government. But army leaders took control in February 2021. Most of the progress made toward better enforcement of anti-money laundering rules had taken place under the elected government headed by Aung San Suu Kyi.

Among its findings, the

FATF's review found inadequate precautions to prevent criminals from running casinos and other non-financial businesses and professions designated for special precautions, such as property agents and gems dealers, lawyers and accountants.

It also cited weak supervision of money changers and non-bank financial institutions and mobile financial services providers, whose importance has grown after the army's seizure of power left many banks barely functioning for a time. But it welcomed progress in addressing the problems. In its statement, the central bank said Myanmar has an "action plan" for addressing the FATF's review. It also noted that it was not designated for countermeasures like Iran

and North Korea, which are also on the blacklist.

Myanmar had increased its compliance to 24 out of 40 recommendations by the Financial Action Task Force, it said. It said the draft action plan would be implemented in the coming year.

More stringent due diligence precautions for money transfers won't prevent banks from conducting business, it said.

"Despite the high-risk jurisdictions being subject to a call for action, it is not a risk factor for Myanmar so people need not worry about it," it said.

It said actions would be taken against currency manipulation and other such "doings that do not comply with the rules and regulations of the Central Bank of Myanmar." □



## Norwegian Prima arrived in Aruba for the first time

ORANJESTAD – Last Saturday was a day where the whole of Aruba could be proud to welcome Norwegian Prima, one of the newest cruise ships in the market. CEO of Aruba Ports Authority NV, Marc Figaroa boarded the boat to personally welcome captain Gustavsen, his crew and the more than 2,100 passengers to Aruba.

A short ceremony took place on board, during which an exchange of the usual plaques took place between Aruba Ports Authority NV, Aruba Tourism Authority, the ship agency and the captain of the Norwegian Prima.

"It was last August when Norwegian Prima began sailing and was baptized in Iceland recently to begin its travel through the Atlantic, arrive in New York and from there begin its 12 day itinerary, of which Aruba forms part. Today, finally we have it visiting. It is a great day for Aruba, for the port and for APA", Marc Figaroa said with a smile of satisfaction on his face.

Figaroa highlighted that the arrival of the Norwegian Prima is an added value for our economy and for



our tourism. It is a positive development that can be seen with great satisfaction. APA together with its partners put a lot of time and effort to welcome this cruise ship to our port. The demand for Aruba remains big and Norwegian Cruise Lines is well aware of this too.

The director of APA is proud to announce that Norwegian Prima will return once more in November, after which it will continue with the rest of its itinerary. This itinerary can be considered an introduction to

the market, and will continue in the following months.

Norwegian Cruise Lines is an important partner for Aruba. It arrives to our island with different ships. Aside from Norwegian Prima having another call in November, another ship from Norwegian will be coming this season to Aruba. In December we will receive another "first call" from Norwegian, the Norwegian Encore. Norwegian is the third cruise line bringing the most visitors to our island. APA is working hard to attract these cruise ships through the whole year, meaning also in

the summer.

Norwegian Cruise Lines has different calls with different ships in the upcoming weeks. Figaroa expects a strong winter season with this partner.

### Norwegian Prima

The Norwegian Prima carries a maximum of 3215 passengers. The cruise ship has 20 floors, 1646 rooms, 16 lifts and measures 299 meters in length. It is called the Prima Class of Norwegian Cruise Line and it is the first of six cruise ships that were ordered in Italy in 2017, the first to be completed and began sailing last August.

Norwegian Cruise Line, also known as Norwegian, is an American cruise line founded in 1966 in Norway, incorporated in Bermuda and with main headquarters in Miami. It is the third biggest cruise line in the world in amount of passengers, controlling around 8.7 percent of the world market for the cruise industry in 2018. It has an annual income of 6.06 billion dollar, and its owner is Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings. In total it counts with a fleet of 18 cruise ships and five more in construction. □





## Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, culinary magic by European top chef in a romantic garden



**PALM BEACH** —A true once-in-a-lifetime experience. The secret garden is located in a traditional Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The Chef's Garden is a 6-course surprise menu with authentic classic French dishes by Dutch top chef Patrick van der Donk. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Welcome in the world of wonders where ambiance, taste and service come together and you feel you are being welcomed in the home of the owner and her team.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm to 10pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Patrick van der Donk - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

### A bit about guest chef Patrick

Chef Patrick van der Donk is a true legend on Aruba. Chef Patrick attended culinary school in the Netherlands where he worked with several of the best Dutch chefs, including two 3-star Michelin chefs who taught him all the tricks of the trade. He was also inspired by self-taught Michelin star chef Raymond Blanc OBE who has educated the most prominent British chefs of today.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Vegan options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

### The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinarian delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon

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## Aruba to me

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Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com).

com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness,

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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from **Nan-**



**cy Kukulinsky Bascom** who is from Kentucky saying;

"Aruba to me is ever changing, breathtaking

sunsets." Thank you for sharing with us what Aruba means to you. ☐

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Every Tuesday  
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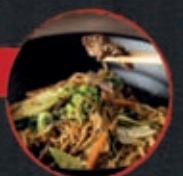


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Every Wednesday

**20% Off on Stir Fry**

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**20% Off on Izakaya**

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For Directions



## Short history of the beginnings of baseball in Aruba



**ORANJESTAD — Baseball was played on the island of Aruba in the 1930's, but only by United States expatriates working for LAGO and living inside the LAGO colony. Jim Bluejacket, the legendary US Indian who had played in two major league teams, worked for LAGO during 14 years and was a key factor in the growth of the popularity of the game in the colony. There is no record of Bluejacket ever playing outside the colony.**

Outside the colony, the game of baseball was introduced to Aruba by Venezuelan immigrants and sailors on the Venezuelan fishing boats that used Aruba as their home port. They formed pick-up teams and played games on Sundays on an open field behind what is now the Court of Justice. One of the Venezuelans that comes to mind is Felix Garrido, grandfather of our current Prime-Minister.

In the late 30s the leader of this group was Raúl Aparicio, a cousin of Luis Aparicio who is now enshrined in the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. The Aparicios were evidently very good at sports. Raúl had two brothers who also played baseball, René and Roman. Rosendo, his only brother who did not play baseball became a profes-

sional soccer player in the Venezuelan league. Rosendo was nicknamed "Cabeza de oro" (golden head) for a memorable header he scored to win a game for his team.

Interestingly, it was in Aruba that Luis Aparicio played his first game outside of Venezuela. This took place in 1950 when he played shortstop for the school he attended. Later he played for "Cabimas" in a doubleheader of the Venezuelan Western League. These official games of the league were authorized to be played in Aruba by the Professional Baseball Organization of Venezuela. Several others who played in those games have also been enshrined.

Luis Aparicio's father was the super popular Luis "El Grande" (the great one) after whom the baseball stadium in Maracaibo is named. He and his brother owned the professional baseball teams "Gavilanes" which later became the "Aguilas", and the "Cabimas".

In the early '40s, another group, mostly immigrants from the Dominican Republic also became very active with pickup teams. Some of these remained active in baseball well into the early '50s; as umpires, managers even as players. Among these were Nestor "Pantin" Guerrero who also had a musical band. Perhaps not so coincidentally, many of Pantin's players were also musicians. Luthai Pantophlet who umpired many years was a well-known drummer. Gaston Hazel was a bongo player; José Bryson and the brothers Nicholson, Teddy and Julio, all played several instruments.

In San Nicolas, baseball was played on the grounds next to where the LAGO Sport Park (now Laveist Sport Park) was officially inaugurated in March 1941.

During the WWII years, baseball got

a big lift from the influx of Puerto Rican and US soldiers stationed here. As LAGO was playing a very important role in the struggle against Hitler, it was able to get all the sports equipment needed here to allow more people to participate.

In the '40s only the Lago Sports Park organized baseball championship games. The first teams to participate were Artraco, (Aruba Trading Co.), Esso Garage and Botica San Lucas. In 1945 Venezuelan employees of the Lago refinery participated under the name of "Cafenol", a very popular Venezuelan coffee brand. Two other groups of Venezuelan immigrants formed the teams "Cerveceria" (named after the iconic team Cerveceria Caracas), and "Venezuela", although not all members of these teams were Venezuelans. This was also the year that the team sponsored by Roxy Café started to play as "Dodgers". Dodgers became the dominant baseball powerhouse till the 1950s.

Other teams that entered the baseball scene in the late 1940s: Pepsi Cola (Oranjestad) and St. Thomas Boys (former students of St. Thomas College, Oranjestad). "Baby Ruth" in San Nicolas played initially under the name "Camel" and "Barnes' Ramblers" the only team consisting of Lago Colony players to participate in the Lago Sport Park championships. "Red Rock Cola" was formed in Oranjestad in 1950. In 1952 the team Pepsi Cola became "Nesbitt's" and had players of seven countries, including two American expats from Lago Colony.

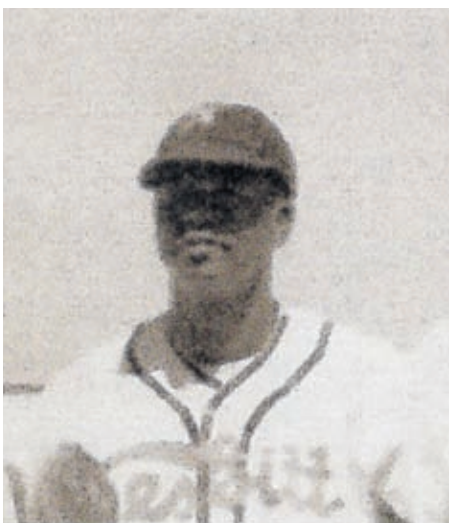
In 1950 a group of prominent members of the Aruba community founded the Amateur Baseball Bond of Aruba (ABBA) to give structure to the management of the sport and became the organizers of official championship games. While maintaining the ex-



isting teams in a league that was referred to as A-class, ABBA established a B-class league in which the "Budweiser" and "Braves" played the first years.

By 1952 Aruba became a member of the International Amateur Baseball Association and fielded a team managed by Joe Proterra, (former pitcher of "Barnes' Ramblers"), that would play for the first time ever in the Amateur Baseball World Series that took place in Havana, Cuba in September. Surprisingly, Aruba won two of its six games and became the darling of the Havana fans. Nell Harms of the Aruban team was named the "Outstanding player of the week" for his performance against Honduras. He allowed just two hits, struck out 15 and hit the only homerun of the game. Joe Cambria, the famous scout for the Washington Senators offered him a contract, but Nel was not interested, but the next year, at the Amateur Baseball World Series in Caracas, Venezuela, Nel and Ruben Phillips did sign and in 1954 they played professional baseball the Georgia-Florida League and the Texas-New Mexico League. They were the first Arubans to play professionally, but not the only ones.

During the games in Havana, contacts were made with the organizers of Little League Baseball in Cuba which eventually resulted in the introduction of Little League in Aruba. Little League of Aruba has been extremely successful: It has produced many players who earned baseball scholarships at universities in the United States, a few who played professionally in the Netherlands and different countries in the Caribbean and five who reached the major leagues: Calvin Maduro, Eugene Kingsale, Radhames Dijkhoff, Sydney Ponson, and Xander Bogaerts one of the brightest stars of Boston Red Sox. □





## Marvin Gomes: The mondi of Aruba is a different landscape every week

**ORANJESTAD –** Walking in the mondi – Aruban wilderness – means exploring the beauty of Aruba, which is never the same. This is the philosophy of ‘hiker extraordinair’, Marvin Gomes (52). Gomes is one of the people who share their experience of walking the mondi of his island the most and he never gets tired, not of sharing and not of walking. What’s more, even on weekdays when he has to work, he takes pictures of the beauty in nature.

Marvin grew up playing in the mondi. His parents would stimulate him to be outdoors, and the mondi around Tanki Flip was ideal, particularly during the rainy season, it was fun to be out there. “The area up to where now is Fantastic Gardens would accumulate water and become a swamp. This must also explain why in this area plants grow so fast”, Gomes explained.

Currently he doesn’t live too far from where he grew up, his house is in Bubali. This makes it easier for him to go to work on bike, since his job is in the tourist area. And for his luck, his house is right next to a mondi.

“We are in an area with just a few houses. And behind our house there is a mondi, a natural area surrounded by houses without a passage.” It is property land (eigendom) which belonged to an American who passed away. Marvin himself was the one who went to find out at kadaster – the land registry – to find out more about this plot of land, and was glad to find out that the intention of the owner was to leave the land in its natural state. And his daughter, who inherited the land, informed Marvin that her intention is to respect his father’s wishes, something that for Marvin, was music to his ears, because despite living in a populated area, he is close to the mondi.

Even so he searches the wilderness



of Aruba every Saturday morning or any moment that he can. “I have been hiking regularly for about five years. I began with Rudy Leysner who still has his group Movimento ta Bida (Movement is Life) and this way I got to know a lot of corners of mondi in Aruba.” Together with Encho Eckmeyer from the Arikok National Park they would explore the nature of the island. “My friends and I got together with them for two years, and after that we decided to break away on our own.”

Nowadays, Marvin and his friends walk with different groups, always ready to share the paths they have discovered, because this is the red line of those who explore the mondi: to share the beautiful experience of what the nature of Aruba can offer.

“I never get tired of walking in the mondi of Aruba. The same path that I walk today is different tomorrow. It is incredible. You can walk a path today and the next week when you go back, you see differ-



ent things. Many things change.” Gomes shares that he receives a lot of comments from others saying that the only thing they see every time is cacti and succulents, “but that’s not true. We notice, by walking regularly, that you can see how the area and environment changes. A little rain needs to fall and you see a change.”

### Every day a moment of peace

The few minutes that Marvin takes to go from home to work not only mean his daily physical activity, but more than anything else, it inspires him to be ready for a good day. “For me it is very nice, in the morning, to go in front of the sea.” But the path by the sea means also going in front of Bubali Plas, which is rich in flora and fauna.

Many people discovered the mondi and walking in the mondi during the pandemic, but not everyone has continued. It is understandable because there are now other activities available, but it is essential for the community to have appreciation for the beautiful and diverse nature that Aruba, despite being small, can offer. “People have joined us and sporadically continue with the hiking”, he said.

The secret of hiking, for those who are passionate, is in their love for their country. “It’s not a joke. You need to wake up at 5am to go on a hike. It is an emotion known by every hiker. If you hear how passionate hikers talk, it’s not about the activity itself but about appre-



ciating everything in the country in which they live. Everyone I know and hikes with passion, simply love the island.” Regardless of the early hours and the challenges, the moment of walking in the mondi means living in the moment and enjoying everything that is around, and that is the best relaxation that nature offers.

This is the reason also why Gomes, who works in tourism, thinks that we need to appreciate how Aruba is, and this needs to be reflected in our architecture. Hotels that are designed in an Aruban landscape need to complement this very same landscape and not become something that is out of place. Most hotels are not built like that, which is a lost opportunity to stand out. “Imagine if the hotel in Seroe Colorado was built in such a way that it becomes part of the nature over there? How beautiful it would have been?”

This way, tourists could appreciate Aruba even more. “Many tourists that I encounter and have as friends on Facebook tell me that they never see Aruba as I put it on pictures.” These are people who maybe go on UTV tours or stay on the beach, and when they see Marvin’s pictures realize that Aruba has a lot more to offer. In other words, Aruba’s hikers not only help expand the knowledge of the Aruban landscape, they are the best ambassadors for the natural wealth of our country. □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

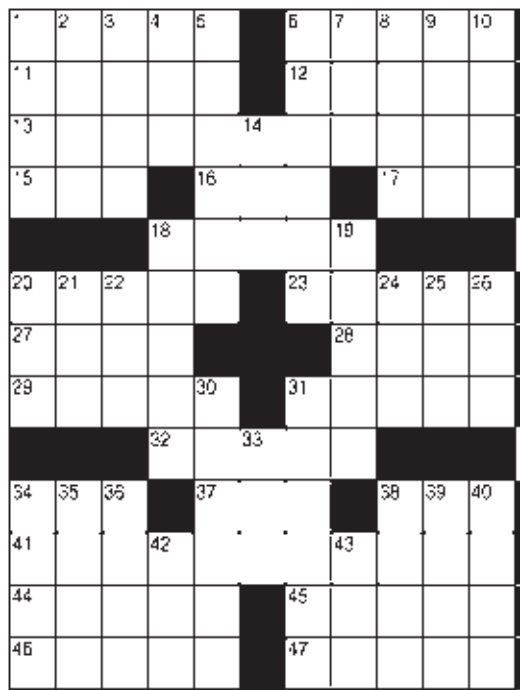
- 1 Forest flora
- 6 Man of steel
- 11 Disney's mermaid
- 12 Curaçao's neighbor
- 13 Parlor's kin
- 15 Casual top
- 16 Director's cry
- 17 "Sure thing!"
- 18 Silver or gold
- 20 Swift
- 23 Disinfectant's target
- 27 High point
- 28 Postal delivery
- 29 Got together
- 31 HMO fee
- 32 Spoof
- 34 TV spots
- 37 Sewing aid
- 38 Paid player
- 41 Clothing store feature
- 44 Be of use
- 45 Main artery
- 46 Assesses
- 47 Ranch animal

## DOWN

- 1 Speedy
- 2 Pennsylvanian port
- 3 Ceremony
- 4 Catch
- 5 Like some bread
- 6 Motley
- 7 Hockey legend
- 8 Bobby
- 9 Channel marker
- 10 Orchestra instrument
- 11 Scots' toppers
- 14 Bolt's partner
- 18 Muddle
- 19 Tart fruit
- 20 Flock father
- 21 Gibbon or gorilla
- 22 Parrot or puppy
- 24 Drake's music
- 25 Hamm of soccer
- 26 Wily
- 30 Eye features
- 31 Winding dances
- 33 Bronze ingredient
- 34 Miles off
- 35 Opera star
- 36 Sports figure
- 38 Skin feature
- 39 Mechanical learning
- 40 Poet
- 42 Cravat
- 43 Turn bad



Yesterday's answer



AXYDIBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-25

## CRYPTOQUOTE

LQTB LYUSQTD CH VYFYBC.  
NBF IZNSM SNUD NVT DTTB.  
UQT WIIHB ZNPCQD NBF  
LQYDJTVD. "UYD BTNV  
QNZZHLLTTB!" PBMBHLB

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: I DON'T SEE HOW A PUMPKIN PATCH COULD BE MORE SINCERE THAN THIS ONE. — "IT'S THE GREAT PUMPKIN, CHARLIE BROWN"

# The best airlines for holiday travel on points



A traveler walks through Terminal 3 at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, Ill., Dec. 28, 2021.

Associated Press

By MEGHAN COYLE of NerdWallet

If you're seeing Halloween decorations at the store, you should take that as a sign the holiday travel season is just around the corner.

Cue the expensive flights! If you're relying on points and miles to cover the cost, you might want to consider whether booking award flights for the holidays is the best use of your travel rewards.

In NerdWallet's annual analysis of airline mile values, holiday flights in December often didn't provide the highest per-mile value compared with flights booked 180 days out or 15 days out from the date of departure. With flight prices up 43% from last year, according to the latest Consumer Price Index data, you'll likely have to use a lot of miles to pay for the flight.

If you're a points and miles maximizer, you probably would prefer to save your miles for a time of year when you might be able to get more value.

But if fares are getting too expensive, you may choose to book award flights instead.

The best airline for holiday award travel based on the value of its points is a four-way tie among American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and Frontier Airlines.

Here's how we came to

that conclusion, plus more advice on how to shop holiday flights on points.

## AIM FOR 1.4 CENTS PER MILE

NerdWallet examined nine major U.S. airlines and analyzed the prices of nearly 600 domestic flights in 2022. In this analysis, holiday flights were defined as those departing on Dec. 18 and returning on Dec. 29. Of the nine airlines examined, four airlines tied for the highest baseline value for miles spent on holiday flights, which was 1.4 cents per mile.

If you fly American, Delta, Frontier or Southwest, you should aim to get about this much when you divide the cash price by the number of miles.

For example, a \$600 round-trip flight should cost about 42,857 miles (or less, if you're getting an even better deal).

Here is the full list of each airline's valuation per mile when used for holiday flights.

Alaska Airlines: 1.2 cents (nonholiday valuation: 1.2 cents).

American Airlines: 1.4 cents (nonholiday valuation: 1.5 cents).

Delta Air Lines: 1.4 cents (nonholiday valuation: 1.5 cents).

Frontier Airlines: 1.4 cents (nonholiday valuation: 0.9 cent).

Hawaiian Airlines 0.9 cent (nonholiday valuation: 1 cent).

JetBlue Airways: 1.3 cents

(nonholiday valuation: 1.5 cents).

Southwest Airlines: 1.4 cents (nonholiday valuation: 1.5 cents).

Spirit Airlines: 0.7 cent (nonholiday valuation: 0.8 cent).

United Airlines: 1.1 cents (nonholiday valuation: 1.2 cents).

Frontier presents a unique opportunity among the four front-runners.

For the most part, 1.4 cents is slightly below the nonholiday valuation of these airlines' miles; American, Delta and Southwest miles are usually worth about 1.5 cents each.

Frontier is the exception where redeeming your miles during the holidays is smart because miles are worth more than normal. Frontier's nonholiday valuation is 0.9 cent.

However, this cost considers only the base fare added fees for seat selection or baggage might decrease your value per point.

## AVOID USING MILES WHEN THEY'RE WORTH LESS THAN 1 CENT

This is a good rule at any time, but particularly during the holidays. A valuation of less than 1 cent per mile is abysmal considering you can often redeem credit card points for cash back at a standard rate of 1 cent each and that's low when compared with travel credit cards that let you redeem through their travel portals at 1.25 cents or 1.5 cents each.

For the holidays, you probably won't want to book Hawaiian or Spirit flights with miles, which are worth 0.9 cent and 0.7 cent, respectively.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MILES

NerdWallet's data shows airline miles are generally worth slightly less when you use them to book holiday flights.

That means you'll probably spend more miles on holiday flights than you would on nonholiday flights. There are still a few ways you can save on holiday travel, though. □



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## EXPLAINER: Dirty bombs sow fear and panic, cause few deaths

By The Associated Press

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — Dirty bombs have long been feared as a potential weapon of terrorists because their main objective is to sow panic, confusion and anxiety by hurling radioactive dust and smoke into the atmosphere.

The Kremlin alleges that Ukraine is preparing to detonate a dirty bomb in order to blame it on Russia and force an escalation to the war that has entered its ninth month. Western countries have dismissed that claim as "transparently false." Although no dirty bomb attack has ever been recorded, two failed attempts to detonate such a device were reported in the southern Russian province of Chechnya more than two decades ago. Here's a look at what ex-



An instrument for detecting radiation is seen on a map of the New York area during an exercise to intercept radioactive "dirty bombs" in waterways near New York, Thursday, April 7, 2011. Associated Press

perts mean by the phrase "dirty bomb:"

### HOW DOES A DIRTY BOMB WORK?

Technically known as radiological dispersion devices, dirty bombs are relatively primitive, imprecise weapons. They are much easier and cheaper to build than a nuclear device and also far less dangerous.

Dirty bombs use conventional explosives, such as dynamite, placed alongside radioactive material, which is then flung outward by the force of the blast. The amount of radioactive material dispersed, while dangerous, is not necessarily lethal.

The material used in the bomb could have been obtained from radioactive sources used in medicine and industry or from research facilities. □

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### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
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Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

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### TRAVEL INFO

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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# Keeping history alive in legal thriller ‘Argentina, 1985’

By **LINDSEY BAHR**  
AP Film Writer

The 1985 Trial of the Juntas was a seismic moment in Argentina’s history, helping to solidify the country’s democratic future after seven years of military dictatorship. But when filmmaker Santiago Mitre started talking about making a classic political thriller about the David vs. Goliath trial, in which public prosecutors Julio Strassera and Luis Moreno Ocampo tried former military leaders for war crimes, including the torture and disappearance of thousands between 1976 and 1983, he was surprised to learn that few of his peers knew much about it. Mitre was only four years old at the time of the trial in 1985, but through his mother who worked in justice her whole life he’d grown up hearing stories about the trial, its importance for Argentina and anecdotes about Strassera’s unique personality (grumpy, but full of humor). Strassera was the veteran prosecutor who reluctantly took on the case, fearful for his family and himself. Ocampo was younger and more idealistic, but also risked alienating his own prominent family, who had significant military ties.



Director Santiago Mitre poses for portraits to promote the film “Argentina, 1985” during the 79th edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Sept. 4, 2022.

Associated Press

Mitre was certain that the personalities and drama of the situation would make for a great film in the vein of classic political thrillers like “All the President’s Men” and “Judgement at Nuremberg.” “Argentina, 1985,” which is currently streaming on Amazon Prime Video, chronicles the momentous trial, which took place under a cloud of extraordinary uncertainty and unease only two years after the dicta-

torship fell. With a death toll that human rights organizations estimate at 30,000, Argentina’s dictatorship is considered Latin America’s deadliest of the 1970s and ‘80s. Less than half of the dead have been recognized at the official level, however, because the military made the bodies of most of its victims disappear. Across five months in the courtroom, during which the prosecutorial team re-

ceived constant personal threats, 833 witnesses testified. Several of those testimonies are used verbatim in the film to great dramatic effect. “It was super important to have direct contact with the people that worked on the trial,” Mitre said. “I spoke to as many as it was possible for me, because I felt that the film needed like to have this stronger human perspective. I spoke to the judges, to the peo-

ple who gave testimony in the trial and of course to the people that were part of the prosecutorial team. It was very important for me for not only for knowing the facts, but to understand what they were feeling.” He met Ocampo, portrayed by Peter Lanzani in the film, many times, and Strassera’s son, who though young at the time, was enraptured by his father’s work. The supportive, engaged Strassera family is a main focus of the narrative. “They were all involved with Julio’s trial,” Mitre said. “It was something that was very sweet.” Upon hearing about the project, Ricardo Darín who had worked with Mitre before wanted not only to play Strassera, who died in 2015, but to produce as well. Being slightly older than Mitre, he remembered the trial well, and wanted to help younger generations who were born into democracy in the country understand what happened. “It was a very, very big deal,” Darín said through a translator. “Let’s not forget that a lot of people in a lot of parts of the society in Argentina back then, they had no idea of the horrors that had happened. □

# Miko Marks draws on church roots and bridges genres

By **STEVEN WINE**  
Associated Press

Miko Marks and the Resurrectors, “Feel Like Going Home” (Redtone Records) Miko Marks created a buzz last month performing at AmericanaFest in Nashville, Tennessee, and her latest album is an engaging encore. “Feel Like Going Home” is also the follow-up to “Our Country,” Marks’ 2021 album that marked the revival of her musical career after a hiatus of more than a decade to focus on family. Marks joins a welcome trend of recent breakouts in country music by Black

women who defy genre boundaries. Her new album draws on gospel, the blues, Motown, Memphis soul, Southern rock and more, the result an auditory rainbow to match the visual delight provided on stage by Marks and her band, the Resurrectors. Marks never oversings, but every note is delivered with fervor on such subjects as deliverance, perseverance, transcendence and empowerment. Her church roots are a unifying element, with sing-along choruses out of the choir loft and ballads as prayer.

Steve Wyreman and Justin Phipps produced and wrote the material with Marks, and make distinctive contributions on multiple instruments. “Let me ride, ride, ride to the other side,” Marks sings on “The Other Side,” and Wyreman’s electric slide guitar emerges to show the way. His frantic playing provides an energetic push on “Trouble,” a topical stomper inspired by the late civil rights leader John Lewis. The song pairs passionate lyrics with an unspoken message: The joyful momentum of Marks’ music is not to be stopped. □



This cover image released by Redtone Records shows “Feel Like Going Home” by Miko Marks and the Resurrectors Redtone Records via Associated Press



# 7 desperate drivers have NASCAR season on the line

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

Joey Logano has little stress headed into Martinsville Speedway, where his results won't make a difference in his march toward the NASCAR championship. The rest of the field? Well, expect chaos.

There are still three spots open in the title-deciding finale and seven drivers head into Sunday's race at NASCAR's smallest and oldest track with a chance. Only 58 points separate Ross Chastain in second from Chase Briscoe in eighth, and a victory can earn a driver an automatic berth into the winner-take-all finale at Phoenix Raceway.

Logano is already locked into the championship race via his victory at Las Vegas two weeks ago. The remaining seven play-off drivers will be fighting for every point possible on a 0.526-mile track that proved in April to be impossible to pass on.

"Nobody's passing anybody at Martinsville, so better bring it," said 2020 NASCAR champion Chase Elliott. "It's gonna be tough." Elliott knows firsthand. He started from the pole at Martinsville in the spring and led 185 laps. But he lost the lead to Hendrick Motorsports teammate William Byron and that was it for



William Byron puts on his helmet during NASCAR cup series qualifying at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022, in Homestead, Fla. William Byron puts on his helmet during NASCAR cup series qualifying at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022, in Homestead, Fla.

Associated Press

Elliott, who finished a perplexing ninth as he stalled out in traffic the rest of the race.

In fact, only four total drivers led laps in the Next Gen car's debut at Martinsville, and Ryan Blaney and Austin Dillon combined to lead a whopping six of the 403 laps. The show belonged to Byron and Elliott, who combined to lead the remaining 397 laps (98.5%). That pushed Hendrick Motorsports to 10,000 laps led at the track in Rick Hendrick's home state of Virginia.

So what does it mean?

Track position is crucial and the Next Gen car, created in part to level the playing field, has left little separation from the front to the back of the grid. The new 18-inch Goodyear tire on the cars has created even more grip, which has alleviated the potential for driver mistakes.

With the chance to race for the Cup championship on the line, drivers are going to have no choice but to be very, very aggressive. But NASCAR has made it

clear over the last three weeks that it is watching closely and won't tolerate any sort of race manipulation or retaliation. Bubba Wallace was suspended for Sunday's race at Homestead-Miami Speedway for deliberately crashing Kyle Larson a week before, and Cole Custer and Stewart-Haas Racing have a Thursday appeal scheduled of their \$200,000 fines for allegedly assisting Briscoe's advance into the third round of the playoffs.

Denny Hamlin, co-owner of

Wallace's car, wrecked Elliott once at Martinsville to trigger a heated post-race exchange. After the message sent by NASCAR the last several weeks, drivers will have to carefully consider what's acceptable this Sunday.

"They drew a very good line," Hamlin said of NASCAR. "They did the right thing. Now it's about can we be more consistent with that for the future? What is the determining factor of crossing that line?"

Blaney, who led five laps at Martinsville in the spring but still thought he had a car capable of winning, sits sixth behind Hamlin below the cutline along with Christopher Bell and Briscoe. Bell and Briscoe both believe they are in must-win situations to advance to the Phoenix finale, but Blaney believes he can qualify on points.

He also knows now he must do it within NASCAR's boundaries.

"I personally think it is good that NASCAR is putting the law down, the hammer down on things that they think are wrong and that they want to act," Blaney said. "That is the only way you can kind of police it. You have to do those things. At the end of the day, it is their call."

"If they see something that they don't like, □

## Russian runner stripped of 2012 Olympics title for doping



Russia's Natalya Antyukh, right, powers ahead of United States' Lashinda Demus to win gold in the women's 400-meter hurdles final during the athletics in the Olympic Stadium at the 2012 Summer Olympics, London, Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012.

Associated Press

**MONACO (AP)** — Russian runner Natalya Antyukh was disqualified on Monday from her 400-meter hurdles win at the 2012 London Olympics for doping, and Lashinda Demus of the United States is set to be upgraded to the gold medal.

Antyukh was already serving a four-year ban in a previous case judged by the Court of Arbitration for Sport last year that stripped her results from 2013 to 2015.

The new ruling based on historical evidence recov-

ered from a Moscow testing laboratory database further disqualified Antyukh in all of her events from July 15, 2012 through June 29, 2013, track and field's Athletics Integrity Unit said. At the 2012 Olympics, on Aug. 8, Demus finished 0.07 seconds behind the Russian winner. Now aged 39, Demus is in line to become an Olympic champion for the first time and get a gold medal from the International Olympic Committee to add to her world title won in 2011. The bronze med-

alist 10 years ago, Zuzana Hejnová of the Czech Republic should be upgraded to silver, and the bronze is set to go to Kaliese Spencer of Jamaica. The AIU did not specify evidence against Antyukh from the Moscow database that was part of a years-long standoff between the World Anti-Doping Agency and Russian authorities.

The latest case was prosecuted at national level in Russia and can be appealed, the Monaco-based AIU said. □



# Judge, perhaps Boone, face uncertain futures after Yanks out



New York Yankees right fielder Aaron Judge (99) walks off the field after grounding out to the Houston Astros to end Game 4 of an American League Championship baseball series, Monday, Oct. 24, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

By **RONALD BLUM**  
AP Baseball Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Aaron Judge's future is uncertain. It remains to be seen whether Aaron Boone's is, too.

Judge's career in pinstripes might have ended when he made the final out in Sunday night's 6-5 loss to the Houston Astros, who completed a four-game AL Championship Series sweep as the Yankees unraveled with yet another defensive meltdown.

"Getting a chance to wear the pinstripes and play right field at Yankee Stadium, it's an incredible honor that I definitely didn't take for granted at any point," Judge said in the quiet clubhouse. "I always check myself pregame and I say a little prayer and I kind of look around the stadium and I kind of pinch myself."

"Very few individuals get a chance to run on that field and do that and play in front of the fans that support us throughout my whole six years here," he added. "It was a special time, and I just kick myself for not bringing home that championship for them."

In the hours before opening day, Judge turned down a seven-year contract that would have paid \$213.5 million from 2023-29, choosing instead to remain eligible for free agency after the World Series.

He set an American League record with 62 homers, tied for the major league lead with 131 RBIs and finished second in the AL with a .311 batting average. But he hit just .139 with three RBIs and 15 strikeouts in the postseason, going 1 for 16 (.063) with no RBIs against the Astros. He made the final out on a comebacker.

"It's baseball, man. I mean, it happens all the time where the greatest of greats go through a struggle," Boone said. "It's a game of failure. You're going to have some ups and downs."

Able to negotiate with all teams starting on the sixth day after the World Series, Judge is due a big reward for betting on himself. He could command a \$300 million-plus contract.

"That's all going to run through my agent," he said. "I haven't even thought about the next step yet. But like I said, we got we got time to figure it out."

Boone agreed last October to a three-year with a team option for 2025. In his fifth season as manager, New York sprinted to a 61-23 record in early July, sparking comparison with the 1998 championship Yankees. But hampered by injuries, the Yankees went 38-40 the rest of the way.

Cleveland extended the Division Series to five games, and Boone's pitching and outfield decisions were repeatedly questioned. Debate will only increase after he left in Nestor Cortes on Sunday night, and the All-Star left-hander allowed Jeremy Pena's tying three-run homer. Boone then removed Cortes, and the Yankees announced the left-hander had a reoccurrence of a left groin injury.

New York's defense was a constant issue in the playoffs, making six errors and failing several other times. The Yankees hit .173 with 103 strikeouts in nine postgame games, including .162 against the Astros.

Jose Trevino was 0 for 11, Oswaldo Cabrera 0 for 9 and Josh Donaldson 1 for 13.

"I could sit here and make excuses about if a ball falls this way, a ball drops that way or a pitch is made here and there," Judge said. "But what it comes down to is they just played better than us, played better defense, came up with the big hits and came away with the series."

Without a World Series title since 2009, New York heads into an offseason in which pitcher Jameson Taillon, outfielder Andrew Benintendi and utilitymen Matt Carpenter and Marwin Gonzalez are eligible for free agency along with relievers Chad Green, Miguel Castro, Zack Britton and Aroldis Chapman.

"They took a chance on me coming back from rehab and elbow surgery," Taillon said. "I loved my time here. I would definitely love to come back." □

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